Pacific Packet Radio Society Newsletter
April 1988

PPRS Meeting announcement:

The April 5 meeting will feature the **Vice President's Special** (no, this is not Air Force 2) and will be announced at the meeting. PPRS meets the first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm at the Ampex Cafeteria, 411 Broadway, Redwood City. Please come and enjoy another inspiring night with your fellow PPRS members.

Spacenet (3/14/88 from N6IIU-1): (From N7FSP @ N4CHV)

SpaceNews originates at KD2BD, and is available on the following packet radio bulletin board stations in the Northeastern United States: K1MEA KB1BD W1AW N2ELC NN2Z WA2RKN WA2SNA WA2YVL KB3UD WB3JOE KD6TH. They are also forwarded in the Pacific Northwest by KT7H @ KE7OM and in Northern California by N7FSP (and the list keeps growing!!!).

SKITREK: Andy McLellan, VE1ASJ will be operating through RS10/RS11 while at the Skitrek Resolute Support Base from March 4 to March 19. Listen to OSCAR 11 Digitalker on 145.825 MHz (+/- 3.3 KHz for doppler) to hear the skiers' positions! The Skitrek expedition began on March 3, 1988 at 0740 GMT. Bad weather delayed the trek from beginning on March 1. UoSAT OSCAR-11 was transmitting the locations via the Digitalker.

RS-1 LIVES AGAIN??: If you have ever tuned to 29.400 MHz and heard the CW code sequence: 5015 5015 5015 5015 5015 5015 5015 55 what you were hearing was NOT RS10/11, but rather RS-1! This experimental RS comes to life at times and is quite easily heard in ham receivers. If anything, it can give you some good code practice!

FRENCH ART IN SPACE: The June/July 1987 issue of "Air & Space" magazine reported how a ring of 100, 20 foot reflective plastic spheres is being prepared for a 1989 launch aboard an Ariane rocket. Once deployed, the ring will expand to a circumference of 16 miles. A 500 mile high near-polar orbit is planned for the ring and it is expected to remain in orbit for about 3 years. This object will be visible in the night sky, and should be quite spectacular, as the ring slowly rotates in the light of the sun. Sources indicate the ring should appear about the diameter of the full moon. (Anyone for "ring-bounce?" -Ed).

HELP! HF Packet: (From N6HMO @ N6IIU)

How about some info on HF packet? It seems a mystery, at least to me. I would appreciate any info you may have. If you have anything you want to run in the SVECS newsletter, let me know. Catch you later..73.

Difference? PK232 - MFJ 1278:

Well I figured that is was time to let some people aware of the differences in the PK-232..and the MFJ-1278 Terminal Interface. If you carefully read the ad, and don't just look at it quickly and send for it because it copies SSTV. Woopie ! in BLACK and WHITE !!. The big thing is that is DOES NOT have the greatest mode beside's PACKET: **A M T O R**

If you've used amtor you know how wonderful it is! I just thought I would point that out. If you are Money tight (radio poor) then alway remember that you may order the PK-232 under a different name for 259.00 (approx) from Heathkit HW-232. Same Unit, But not as Pretty (I think) They have it.. and you can put it together. ! Well good Luck and Happy Hamming. You can catch me on 14.303 Voice.. 14.107.5 BBS or Leave Messages to KB6GOZ @ W6PW-3.

Newsletter:

The newsletter thrives on the related experiences of its readers. Share with the PPRS membership any packeteering news you find. How does one get on HF gateways? Are there any applications of SS7? Almost anything packet related is suitable for this newsletter. . If you have some questions you can write me: Mike Youngberg, KI6AP, 181 Merced Drive, San Bruno, 94066-2519. (KI6AP @ N6IIU-1)

LOCAL COMMANDS AVAILABLE ON NET/ROM NODES AND HOW TO USE THEM

On your local NET/ROM node there are several commands available to the user. These are: **CONNECT CQ IDENT NODES PARMS ROUTES** and **USERS.**

The **CONNECT** command allows for a station to connect to another node or user. The connection to another node can be made transparent to the nodes linking to the destination. Downlinking to another user can be made either directly or with the aid of digipeaters (ugh, up to 8).

The **CQ** command is for stirring up connects, although only one connection can be made per each CQ issued on that channel. The origination (you) station can type "CQ +upto 74 additional charactors" less CR's. Answering a CQ is either direct or connecting to the node and issuing a connection to the callsign listed in parenthesis. Ex:

Uplink(N7FSP) <~~> CQ(N7FSP-15)
-shows uplinking station- -shows call for connection-

The <~~> indicates connection in progress, a <--> shows a connection that was succesfully connected, note the ~~ vs. --

IDENT parameter give the alias of that local node from which the command is asked. This information is also found on the NODES, PARMS, ROUTES, and USERS lists from the same node. Kinda redundant.

NODES when toggled give a current listing of all (hopefully) known nodes in which that node knows how to route a connection to. This information is exchanged to and from other NET/ROM nodes within the network.

ROUTES is a parameter that allows the user to find another route that is a path to another node. This also has the paths that have been either permed into or has learned from another node on how to connect to another node via an alternate path if none exists then via the designated digi.

USERS shows who is currently using the node. Those uplinked, downlinked and those in circuit. In circuit users are either connect from and or to a distant node, and those nodes are listed with alias if known and the destination node is listed.

Further information can be obtained from many local mailboxes in some of the information databases covering NET/ROM. If further assistance is required please feel free to ask your local NET/ROM guru or send me a note and I'll try to assist. (N7FSP @ N4CHV). DE N7FSP - SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA.

NETROM available within TCP/IP: (Path: N6IIU!N7EQN!WD6CMU!K3MC)
To: PACKET-RADIO@EDDIE.MIT.EDU Reply-To: dan@pipe.cs.wisc.edu (Dan Frank)

This has been posted to tcp-group, but since some readers may not be on that list, I'll summarize here as well. I have completed a preliminary implementation of net/rom level 3 (i.e. network layer) in the ka9q tcp/ip package. This implementation provides several features:
(1) IP datagrams may be passed across net/rom networks, with automatic routing by intermediate net/rom nodes. (2) A computer running the ka9q code may act as a relay site in a net/rom network. It may not act as an endpoint node, except for tcp/ip traffic. (3) The link connection and channel are shared between IP and net/rom traffic, so you a node may relay *both* net/rom and IP traffic simultaneously. (4) Support has been added for the net/rom serial framing method, which allows connection to a net/rom TNC via its serial interface. This allows the ka9q package to be used as a packet switch for multiple net/roms, which eliminates the need for diode matrix bridges and half duplex operation on the serial links. It also makes possible efficient operation of wormhole links where carrier detection is delayed or nonexistent.

The network level implementation includes the ability to send and receive routing broadcasts, and manual and automatic updates to the (net/rom) routing table. One feature added that is not in net/rom is "node filtering", which allows the package to reject routing broadcasts from particular nodes, or only accept them from a specified group of nodes. This can provide immunity from band opening problems and "alligator" sites. At some point this will likely be added to the official release. If you have a need for the code in the meantime, you can get it on louie in nrnet.arc, or contact me. 73, Dan W9NK

PS-186 news 3/10/88: (Path: N6IIU!N7EQN!WD6CMU-Relayed via HamNet)

PS-186 Project Status (03/10/88) from Franklin Antonio, N6NKF

What is it: The PS-186 is a 4-port high speed (>1Mbit/sec) packet switch designed by WB6HHV, KA6IQA, & N6NKF. It is described in detail in the ARRL 6th Networking Conference Proceedings..

Status: Checkplots of the Rev-B PS-186 board artwork are now in hand. Found a few things that did not get changed correctly, so it looks like there will be one more trip thru the CAD machine before we build the 2nd round of boards. This will slip our schedule another two weeks, but we want Rev-B to be perfect! We demonstrated some of the new software for the PS-186 at the TAPR meeting in February. We had two PS-186 boards on hand. One ran Ron Raikes WA8DED's beta-version NET/ROM code, and the other ran MS-DOS supported by Skip Hansen WB6YMH's BIOS. It's great to see real software running on these boards!

We were finally able to document the public-domain status of the PS-186 debugger software last month. The PS-186 debugger is a heavily modified and expanded version of a pre-existing debugger that was produced by a large company. We will now distribute the debugger, in source form, with PS-186's. We've had requests that the debugger use certain interrupts, or avoid certain interrupts, or avoid using certain RAM space, etc. Now software developers will have the source code, so can make that sort of minor mod whenever the urge strikes. We hope also that the availability of public-domain source code to an '86 family debugger might assist other amateur projects using this family of processor.

We often get questions about availability of production quantities of the PS-186. Until now, we could only say that we were looking into the possibility. I'm pleased to announce that we have reached an agreement with Advanced Electronic Applications (AEA), of Lynnwood, Washington, whereby AEA is now licensed to produce and sell PS-186's. 73, N6NKF (for N6NKF, KA6IQA, & WB6HHV)

BBS DXing: (To digi or not to digi?): (You knew you'd get it sooner or later!)

From: WD6CMU @ WD6CMU Subject: My 2 cents on BBS DXing

One of the reasons users BBS DX is because they can't find what they want on the local BBS. One of the reasons they can't find what they want is because the sysop may not want or be able to put every possible piece of information on his BBS. What nobody seems to consider is that if the users would just tell their local sysop what information they need, they might reach a useful compromise The information on a BBS reflects both the interests of the sysop who runs it and the users who use it. If the users who are DXing don't inform their local sysop what information they are searching for, then there is little likelyhood that it will ever appear locally. It is unreasonable to expect a sysop to read the minds of his users and know what information is desired. Please, folks, check with your sysop before going off to regularly raid far away BBSs. If he's not interested in carrying the information, nobody will blame you for going elsewhere. Chances are that you will get what you want sooner and quicker and leave more network capacity for the rest of us. 73, eric

Path: N6IIU!N7EQN!WD6CMU From: NI6A @ WD6CMU

It has been a policy of the Northern Calif Sysop Assn (since 1985) to discourage BBS Dxing. This was mainly due to the extra loading caused on packet channels when a distant user uses one or more digis and/or nodes to ascertain the same information from a more direct source and/or on a less crowded channel. The attitude was always for all sysops to make sure that all "meaningful" bulletins to the rest of the network were always distributed to all other BBS. This was voted on and incorporated into the proceedings of previous NorCal Sysop Assn meetings. This means that if a user puts in a QST on your BBS that is sent to ALL but does not contain the @ norcal, @ allcal or @ designator that is germane to the content and audience; then it is the duty of the sysop to make sure that this bulletin gets edited and sent on to its proper distribution. Of course this requires some judgment and effort by the sysop but we will always have users that require our intervention. Of course, judgment as to suitability must be made by the individual sysops.

The reason I am bringing this is up now is that a user confessed to me that he was a DX BBSer and had to come clean to me. I nodded and accepted his confession in which he bitterly cried out that there is a great disparity on a few BBSes who have more bulletins of "importance" (to this poor sinner) than the others. This BBS DXer having being addicted to Ham Radio information from an early age could not restrain himself from checking into these various BBSes where he consubstantiated all new data bulletins from BBS to BBS until he was finally satiated (usually into the wee hours of the morning). Hoping that I would have a way out for him and others so afflicted like himself; I have thus put out this bulletin for your kind attention. Thank you.

Path: N6IIU!N7EQN!WD6CMU!W6CUS!W0RLI!KB6IRS From: KB6IRS @ KB6IRS

The truth is we Sysops are different with different personalities and priorities in a diverse hobby. We have chosen to become sysops for different reasons, some of which we share in common: Public Service, justification of our equipment, another vehicle for self-expression, and a means to exercise our individualism.

The original concept of Packet BBSs/Mailboxes was to store and forward messages to or from fellow amateurs. The idea of being able to pick up all your mail at one location is not new (USPS). However, we have moved into the Information Age and these systems we have put together make available to all amateurs with packet an information database of significant and formidable proportion. Anyone on packet has available a wealth of information in the form of bulletins pertaining to all facets of the hobby. As sysops we have become information database managers. As individuals, we will manage our database according to our personal interests and according to our perception of the needs of our users. Because it is not practical to keep bulletins online forever, we will kill some earlier than others and delete some immediately depending on our own judgment. Thus our BBSs will be different reflecting us as individuals with the freedom of expression.

It is a sad note if individuals are made to feel guilty because they check into more than one BBS. If BBS DXing is *still* to be discouraged then I suggest we examine our methods or we may find ourselves with a lot of bitter users, or none at all! The method I suggest is to replace the need. If all BBSs are exactly alike (cloned) there will be no reason for checking into more than one (pretty boring). Questions: If we all become cloned and are forced into becoming exactly alike, how many of us still want to be a Sysop? Is the `85 ruling and thinking still valid? Best regards to all; Fred, KB6IRS via W0RLI LAN Gateway.

WB6W NCNET 0324/2225 more on BBS DXing

I agree with WD6CMU concerning BBS DXing. While it tends to tie up the channel while it is going on, it should be allowed if people don't do it TOO often. I've found that things on the NV6Z mbx (a marginal link for me) that did not appear on N6IIU-1 at all! One needs to look at another mbx to see what might be missed on the home mbx. I find that checking into NV6Z once a month or so is enough to keep me current. The rest of the time I restrict my activities to my home mbx.

A complete ban on BBS DXing would be as damaging to packet radio (and Amateur radio as a whole) as would unrestricted BBS DXing. 73 de Glenn WB6W @ N6IIU-1

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